

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

A complete listing of the claims is as follows:

Claim 1. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip rim-base for a rim of a wheel, the sealing strip rim-base being adapted to be positioned upon an outer annular channel of the rim, the outer annular channel being adapted to have a tire mounted thereon, the outer annual channel having an upper bridge with a central well bordered by opposite lateral edges and a pair of opposite lateral flanges substantially parallel to a radial plane of the rim, with the lateral flanges having laterally opposed lips on upper ends of the flanges, said sealing strip rim-base comprising:

a continuous annular strip;

in cross section, the annular strip of the sealing strip rim-base comprising:

a generally U-shaped groove having a shape to adapt the sealing strip rim-base to be engaged in the central well of the rim;

two lateral extensions extending laterally outwardly from said central groove adapted to lie upon the opposite lateral edges of the rim;

two walls extending generally radially from said lateral extension extensions, said two walls adapted to be positioned along the lateral flanges of the rim;

two lips extending laterally inwardly from respective ones of said two walls, said two lips of the sealing strip rim-base adapted to be positioned radially inward/beneath inward and beneath the laterally opposed lips of the upper ends of the flanges of the rim, each of said two lips of the sealing strip having a generally radially inwardly facing tire retaining surface.

Claim 2. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip rim-base according to claim 1, wherein:

said lips of the flanges of the rim include uppermost ends;

said lips of the sealing strip rim-base have uppermost ends positioned at a height, with respect to a cross section of the sealing strip rim-base, to adapt the lips of the sealing strip rim-base to be positioned no higher than said uppermost ends of the lips of the flanges of the rim.

Claim 3. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip rim-base according to claim 1, wherein:

each of said lips of the sealing strip rim-base has an exterior support surface oriented substantially perpendicular to a general direction of said walls of the sealing strip rim-base.

Claim 4. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip rim-base according to claim 1, wherein:

each of said lips of the sealing strip rim-base has a cross section that narrows in a direction extending toward a median plane of the sealing strip rim-base.

Claim 5. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip rim-base according to claim 1, wherein:

each of said lips of the sealing strip rim-base projects approximately 0.85 millimeters from a respective inner surface of one of said walls of the sealing strip rim base.

Claim 6. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip ~~rim-base~~ according to claim 1, wherein:

said U-shaped groove is formed by lateral walls having projecting grooves or ridges adapted to connect mechanically with ridges or grooves, respectively, of the central well of the rim.

Claim 7. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip ~~rim-base~~ according to claim 1, wherein for a rim of a wheel, the sealing strip being adapted to be positioned upon an outer annular channel of the rim, the outer annular channel being adapted to have a tire mounted thereon, the outer annular channel having an upper bridge with a central well bordered by opposite lateral edges and a pair of opposite lateral flanges substantially parallel to a radial plane of the rim, with the lateral flanges having laterally opposed lips on upper ends of the flanges, said sealing strip comprising:

a continuous annular strip;

in cross section, the annular strip of the sealing strip comprising:

a generally U-shaped groove having a shape to adapt the sealing strip to be engaged in the central well of the rim, said groove of the sealing strip having ~~rim-base~~ a projecting rib;

two lateral extensions extending laterally outwardly from said groove adapted to lie upon the opposite lateral edges of the rim;

two walls extending generally radially from said lateral extensions, said two walls adapted to be positioned along the lateral flanges of the rim;

two lips extending laterally inwardly from respective ones of said two walls, said two lips of the sealing strip adapted to be positioned radially inward and beneath the laterally opposed lips of the upper ends of the flanges of the rim.

Claim 8. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip rim-base according to claim 7, wherein:

said projecting rib has a shape, in cross section, tapering in a direction extending exteriorly of the sealing strip rim-base.

Claim 9. (*Currently Amended*) A sealing strip rim-base according to claim 1, further comprising:

a valve hole bordered with a flange, said flange projecting in a direction radially inward ~~interiorly~~ of the sealing strip rim-base.

Claim 10. (*Canceled*)

Claim 11. (*Currently Amended*) A rim for a wheel, said rim comprising:

an outer annular channel, said outer annular channel comprising:

a pair of lateral flanges, said lateral flanges comprising a pair of laterally opposed lips, a respective one of said pair of lips on each of radially outer ends of said flanges;

a bridge extending between said pair of lateral flanges, said bridge comprising a pair of lateral edges extending inwardly from said lateral flanges toward a median plane of the rim and a well extending radial inwardly from said lateral edges;

a sealing strip rim-base, separate from said outer annular channel, positioned within said outer annular channel, said sealing strip rim-base comprising:

a depression positioned over said well of said bridge of said annular channel, said depression containing a radial groove adapted to receive a pair of beads of a tire;

a pair of lateral extensions extending laterally outwardly from said depression of said sealing strip rim-base, said lateral extensions positioned over said lateral edges of said bridge;

a pair of walls extending radially from said lateral extensions, said pair of walls being positioned along said lateral flanges of said annular channel;

a pair of lips extending laterally inward from respective ones of said two walls, said pair of lips of said sealing strip rim-base being positioned radially inward of, and not radially outward beyond, said pair of lips of said lateral flanges of said annular channel, each of said pair of lips of the sealing strip having a generally radially inwardly facing tire retaining surface.

Claim 12. (*Currently Amended*) A rim according to claim 11, wherein:

said lips of said sealing strip rim-base have radially outermost ends positioned no further radially than outermost ends of said lips of said flanges of said annular channel.

Claim 13. (*Currently Amended*) A rim according to claim 11, wherein:

each of said lips of said sealing strip rim-base has an exterior support surface oriented substantially perpendicular to a general direction of said walls of said sealing strip rim-base.

Claim 14. (*Currently Amended*) A rim according to claim 11, wherein:

each of said lips of said sealing strip rim-base has a cross section that narrows in a direction extending toward a median plane of said sealing strip rim-base.

Claim 15. (*Currently Amended*) A rim according to claim 11, wherein:

each of said lips of said sealing strip rim-base projects approximately 0.85 millimeters from a respective inner surface of one of said walls of said sealing strip rim base.

Claim 16. (*Currently Amended*) A rim according to claim 11, wherein:

said well of said annular channel includes a pair of lateral walls having projecting ridges or grooves;

said depression of said sealing strip rim-base includes a pair of lateral walls having projecting grooves or ridges provided for a mechanical connection with said ridges or grooves, respectively, of said annular channel.

Claim 17. (*Currently Amended*) A rim according to claim 11, wherein for a wheel, said rim comprising:

an outer annular channel, said outer annular channel comprising:

a pair of lateral flanges, said lateral flanges comprising a pair of laterally opposed lips, a respective one of said pair of lips on each of radially outer ends of said flanges;

a bridge extending between said pair of lateral flanges, said bridge comprising a pair of lateral edges extending inwardly from said lateral flanges toward a median plane of the rim and a well extending radial inwardly from said lateral edges;

a sealing strip, separate from said outer annular channel, positioned within said outer annular channel, said sealing strip comprising:

a depression positioned over said well of said bridge of said annular channel, said depression containing a radial groove adapted to receive a pair of beads of a tire, said depression of said sealing strip having rim base has a projecting rib extending radially from said groove;

a pair of lateral extensions extending laterally outwardly from said depression of said sealing strip, said lateral extensions positioned over said lateral edges of said bridge;

a pair of walls extending radially from said lateral extensions, said pair of walls being positioned along said lateral flanges of said annular channel;

a pair of lips extending laterally inward from respective ones of said two walls, said pair of lips of said sealing strip being positioned radially inward of, and not radially outward beyond, said pair of lips of said lateral flanges of said annular channel.

Claim 18. (*Currently Amended*) A rim according to claim 17, wherein:

said projecting rib has a shape, in cross section, tapering in a direction extending radially outwardly from said sealing strip rim base.

Claim 19. (*Currently Amended*) A rim according to claim 11, further comprising:

a valve hole bordered with a flange, said flange projecting in a direction radially inward of said sealing strip rim base.

Claim 20. (*Original*) A wheel comprising said rim of claim 11.

Claim 21. (*Original*) A wheel according to claim 20, further comprising:

a plurality of spokes mounted in openings within said rim.